

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

Shavuos 5780

Year 10, #392

חג שמחה

חג השבועות תש"פ

Good Middos are the remedy for Kabalas Hatorah

עד מקהרת השבת השביעית תספרו חמשים יום: (כג טו)

You shall count until the day after the seventh week, the fiftieth day, The Rambam writes, "Just as a person must repent for his sins, so must one seek out his bad thoughts and middos that need correction, such as anger, hatred, and the like. One must do teshuvah on all of these." During the days of Sefiras Ha'Omer, it is especially important for one to improve on his middos, and in particular, to increase his Ahavas Yisrael. While it is true that the Jewish people received their physical freedom on Pesach, that freedom was essentially without purpose until they were given the Torah on Mount Sinai on Shavuos. Thus Shavuos was the ultimate purpose of the Pesach miracle. The Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 9:3) states דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה / Derech Eretz Kadma L'Torah. The way of the world precedes the Torah. Middos Tovos, good attitudes, and fine behavior, are essential in order to have a part in the Torah. Therefore the 49 days of the Omer are essential to improve on the Middos Tovos, and one must correct his character traits, in order to insure a Chelek in the Torah by following the Midrash דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה.

It is for that reason we learn Chapter 6 of Pirkei Avos the Shabbos before Shavuos, which teaches the right Middos that a person should have. Hence, here again we have the obligation of good Middos as a requisite to receiving the Torah. The Sefas Emes of Gur states that the entire Pirkei Avos is learned the six weeks prior to Shavuos, and Pirkei Avos opens with the words, "Moshe received the Torah from Sinai," as if to say: While all the lessons and guidelines for proper behavior contained in this tractate are a credit to those who follow them, the primary intent in following them should be to make oneself a fitting receptacle for Torah.

The great Baal Mussar, Reb Elyah Lopian always said: without middos, there is nothing at all. Once he told a maashal to express the importance of good middos: Two people in Russia were arrested for dealing with counterfeit Money. One was caught with thousands of counterfeit bills in his possession. Not one counterfeit bill was found by the other crook but police found the printing press, which printed the counterfeit money, in his home. The holder of the counterfeit bills was sent to jail for a year. The second criminal, who owned the press, was sent to jail for seven years. "Is this justice?" he asked the jury. "This other man had thousands of counterfeit bills, and he is only imprisoned for a year. Not one counterfeit bill was found in my possession. Why should I be imprisoned for seven years?" The judge explained, "Everything is just and everyone receives what they deserve. The punishment for owning

thousands of counterfeit bills is only one year imprisonment. But you have the printing press in your home, and there is no limit of the amount of harm you can produce. Therefore, your crime is even worse, and the verdict was more severe." Reb Eliyah Lopian explains that there are people who have sins on their hands, but bad middos are even worse. When one has bad middos there is no limit to the corruption that he can create, hatred, arguments arrogance, all this is an obstacle to Kabalas HaTorah. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

The prelude to Kabalas Hatorah

וידבר ה' אל-משה במדבר סיני: (א א)

"Hashem spoke to Moshe in the Wilderness of Sinai" (1:1) The Midrash Rabbah says: בנ' דברים ניתנה התורה, באש, ובמים, ובמדבר / The Torah was given with three things – with fire, with water and with wilderness... Why with these three things? Just as these things are free for all mankind, so are the words of Torah free...." The Dubno Maggid explains that fire, water and wilderness symbolize the three qualities needed to grow great in Torah. Fire: The person's Divine service must be aflame and with fervor within him. Water: The person must thirst for words of Torah just as one thirsts for water. Wilderness: He must be content with little and be as free of materialism as the wilderness. This is a prelude to Kabalas Hatorah on Shavuos.

Praying for understanding the Torah

The day that the Torah was given to Klal Yisrael, is the right time to pray to Hashem to give us the right frame of mind to understand His Torah, and the aura of it. והאר עינינו בתורתך. The righteous Yidden have throughout the generations, spent hours on the Tefilah of Ahavas Oilam before Krias Shema. Our goal in this prayer is וקרבתנו מלכנו. that Hashem should bring us closer to Him, which will come as a result of להודות לך וליחדך באהבה when we praise and thank Hashem. The first Rebbe of Belz, Rav Shalom, praised the Shacharis prayer of the Chasam Sofer on Shavuos. The Rebbe said: his prayer of Neila on Yom Kippur, could not come close to the elevation of Kedusha that the Chasam Sofer had. The Rebbe stated, that is one of the reasons that he is known as the heilige Chasam Sofer.

When do we connect to Eretz Yisrael with the Kriah?

In the diaspora we celebrate two days of Yomtov Shavuos. Hence, this year Yomtov falls on Friday and Shabbos. This Shabbos we read from the Torah the portion of Yomtov. Whereas, in Eretz Yisrael, they celebrate only one day Yomtov, therefore, Shabbos is a regular day for reading the

Parsha of Naso. Whereas in the diaspora we will read Parshas Naso the following week, and in Eretz Yisrael they will read Parshas Bahaloscha. This will only continue for 5 weeks, and when in Eretz Yisrael they will read Parshas

Balak, we will read Chukas and Balak together, and then the following week we would be caught up, and we all will read Parshas Pinchas.

STORY OF THE WEEK A Shavuos miracle (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

*******The Belzer Rebbe's gartel rescues a Yid from harm*******

A chosid of the first Belzer Rebbe, HaRav Shalom זצוק"ל of Belz" also known as the "Sar Shalom", once traveled from deep in Russia, from a faraway shtetl, to be in his Rebbe's holiness for Yomtov Shavuos. But things did not unfold as he anticipated. When he approached to give "Sholom Aleichem" greeting to the Rebbe, he was met with an altogether unnerving response: "Return now to your home. You will reach it in time for Yomtov. I am giving you this gartel as a gift. When you are awake throughout the night of Shavuos, and you will recite the saying of *Tikkun Leil Shavuos*, make sure that you wear it the entire time. Go *lechaim ule'sholom*, my son."

The Rebbe's pronouncement struck the man like a thunderbolt. With a bitter wail, he exclaimed: "But Rebbe, I beg you, let me stay here in your presence. I suffered greatly on the long and hard road from my town, just to be here with the Rebbe for Shavuos. How can I just turn around and repeat the journey in reverse?" The Tzaddik appeared unmoved. He merely emphasized: "Now is not the time to ask questions. Just follow my instructions. Another detail: Beware of removing this gartel the entire night, and this year don't go to beis medrash as you usually do to recite the Tikkun. Say the entire nusach at home after your Yomtov meal and all will be well." Having exhausted all appeals, he had no choice but to return home.

After an exhausting and strenuous journey, he rolled into the shtetl late in the afternoon on Erev Shavuos. Needless to say, his wife was startled to see him back so soon and quickly surmised that something was odd. "What are you doing back here, Husband? The idea was for you to spend Shavuos with the Belzer Rebbe, so what happened? Not only that, but do realize how late it is? The zman is in forty-five minutes, barely enough for you to get ready for Yomtov. "Believe me, I am as puzzled as you are. With barely a word, the Rebbe sent me back home with this gartel in hand, which he instructed me, without the slightest hint of an explanation, to wear the entire night of Shavuos."

His wife, whose *emunas tzaddikim* was very firm, simply said: "If the Rebbe told you what to do, then we have to obey. We must not think into it. There's obviously something going on here that we don't understand." The chosid ate the Seuda, and sang nice Zemiros. After the meal, the chosid instead of going to Shul as he would always do that night, sat at home, wrapped in the gartel as the Rebbe had directed, and said the Tikkun Leil Shavuos as he did every year, with a loud and studious niggun. Suddenly, he heard heavy footsteps at his door and knew instinctively what they meant.

His *gubernia* -locality- had been plagued by an elusive band of merciless, bandits, who would invade houses, steal what they could and eliminate any witnesses. He was prepared to meet his Maker when the bandits starting pounding on the door with their hatchets. They managed to break in, but upon seeing the Yid, they became paralyzed and speechless, glued to their spot helplessly. Our chosid took the Rebbe's gartel and used it to tie the leader's hands and feet as the others watched helplessly. He ran to call the police who came and arrested the whole band, showering our hero with praise for apprehending the vicious fugitives. Now the Rebbe's intentions became clear as day: the purpose for the man's return home was to rescue his wife from a cruel end and to save his property, but one thing remained a mystery: why did the paralysis envelop the intruders the instant they stepped across his threshold? Upon interrogation, the truth emerged: the robbers revealed that they had heard that the man would be away for the Jewish holiday, which made his family and property a tempting and easy target. Their plan was to kill, and empty the house of all valuables. But when they viewed the chosid encircled in the Rebbe's gartel, a panic took them in its grip and their criminal career came to a crashing end. The chosid saw now, that the Belzer Rebbe's wondrous gartel and Ruach HaKodesh guarded him at long distance from the Rebbe, and kept him whole in body, spirit, and worldly possessions.

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may he stand before Hashem and beg for the redemption of Klal Yisrael

הגליון מוקדש לעי"נ הבחור החשוב יוחנן ע"ה בן יחזקאל בנימין רובי נ"י ו' סיון תשע"ט טוב שם טוב משמן טוב!